

## SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING

FEBRUARY 20, 2013

The Special Meeting of the Council of the County of Kaua'i, was called to order by the Council Chair at the Council Chambers, 4396 Rice Street, Suite 201, Lihu'e, Kaua'i, on Wednesday, February 20, 2013 at 8:42 a.m., after which the following members answered the call of the roll:

Honorable Tim Bynum (*present at 8:45 a.m.*)  
Honorable Gary L. Hooser  
Honorable Ross Kagawa  
Honorable Nadine K. Nakamura  
Honorable JoAnn A. Yukimura  
Honorable Jay Furfaro, Council Chair

Excused: Honorable Mel Rapozo

### APPROVAL OF AGENDA.

Ms. Nakamura moved for approval of the agenda as circulated, seconded by Ms. Yukimura, and unanimously carried.

### INTERVIEWS:

#### **LIQUOR CONTROL COMMISSION:**

- **Pauline D. Ventura** – Term ending 12/31/2015

Chair Furfaro: Aloha and good morning. I would like to call to order, a Special Meeting of the County Council. Let the record note that Mr. Rapozo has an excused absence. He is traveling on behalf of the Council. I got a call that Mr. Bynum will be in at approximately 9:00 a.m. He will not be absent from our regular meeting. Today's Special Council Meeting is for the purpose of doing an interview of the Liquor Control Commission appointment. On that note, may I ask Pauline Ventura to please come up? Good morning, Pauline.

PAULINE D. VENTURA: Good morning.

Chair Furfaro: May I say that we really appreciate your willingness to serve in the role of Commission appointee. You have done us the honor, I would say, of serving on our past Liquor Commission, as well as I believe you served on the Board of Ethics for an appointed period, as well. May I first start

by saying thank you very much for your willingness to serve on our Boards and Commissions.

Ms. Ventura: I am very happy to do so. It gets me out of the kitchen.

Chair Furfaro: Pauline, I am going to let you speak to the members first about a little on your background and your past Commissions, if you would. Then we will open it up for some questions and answers. Thank you.

Ms. Ventura: I think probably everybody knows who we are, thanks to Melvin. I like being on the Commissions because especially as I get older, and the kids are gone, then it is nice to have a connection to what is going on in the County, and stay kind of involved. The Ethics Commission was years ago, but that was a very serious Commission, as is the Liquor, but the Ethics Commission, I always felt had consequences, and you had to be very, very cautious. The Liquor Commission has come down to following the Rules of the Department, and being acquainted with them. I know when I was here for a hearing for the first time, someone asked, "Can you be fair, even though you are going to know the people?" That turned out not to be a huge problem. There are times when people come before the Commission, that it is heartbreaking in a way, when you see long-time employees who have made a quick mistake, and you think, "Should they be judged on that little mistake when they have had all these years of good service, and doing the proper thing?" The answer is, "Unfortunately, yes." They have to in order to bring out those issues, especially with young people, you have to stick to the Rules. That is a hard part of the job, but I enjoy coming in, being here, and being part of it.

Chair Furfaro: Thank you. On that note, members, do you have questions for Pauline, who has been a Commissioner on two (2) different Boards for us? JoAnn, go right ahead.

Ms. Yukimura: Hi, Pauline. As you have shown us just with your few statements this morning, you are a veteran Board Member, and you know some of tension and challenge of being on a Board and making some hard decisions. I do not have any real questions about how you would perform. I am just very grateful that you want to stay involved in the community, and use your experience to serve again. I just wanted to ask a personal question, but I think it is related to the depth of your experience and perspective. How many grandchildren do you have now?

Ms. Ventura: We have fourteen (14) grandchildren, but I always point out that we have eight (8) children. If you do the math, some are producing well, and some are slackers. We have to have a family meeting, I think. They are not all doing their jobs.

Ms. Yukimura: I only ask that because having fourteen (14) grandchildren, you have a real stake in the future of both the island and the world. I think it is wonderful that a grandmother would be able to serve on the Liquor Commission, because there are many issues involving young people too.

Ms. Ventura: Yes, there are. You know we had a lot of children. It did give us the opportunity to—especially now as they get older, and things that they said, “Mom...nobody cares.” Now that they are parents, they suddenly have a different take on many things, including drinking, and probably so do I. Age does bring maybe some wisdom. Maybe. I am praying for them.

Ms. Yukimura: Yes. We are really thankful that you are willing to put in the hours that it takes and that you come from that kind of perspective and wisdom that comes both with years and having children and grandchildren. Thank you very much.

Ms. Ventura: You are welcome.

Chair Furfaro: Thank you, JoAnn. Other members? Mr. Hooser.

Mr. Hooser: Yes, good morning.

Ms. Ventura: Good morning.

Mr. Hooser: I almost feel like I need to disclose that...

Ms. Ventura: We are neighbors?

Mr. Hooser: Yes, and we carpooled our children to school for quite some time.

Ms. Ventura: Many, many years.

Mr. Hooser: Yes.

Ms. Ventura: That means we have grown old together.

Mr. Hooser: That is right. We have. Gracefully. I want to thank you for being willing to serve. The Liquor Commission and the Liquor industry like the bars, and that whole environment, in some communities is a center of corruption, and controversy; both in the establishments, as well as in the Commission itself sometimes. I find it interesting and refreshing that you are willing and interested in serving on the Liquor Commission. I was wondering, “What motivates you to be interested in this particular Commission?”

Ms. Ventura: You speak of corruption, and you look at Kaua'i's Department of Liquor, there is almost none anywhere, and even in any Commission. The people there have such integrity, and from the get-go, when I first met Eric Honma ten (10) years ago or twelve (12) years ago, he has never changed. He has always...he has a sore back now, but beyond that, he is just an incredible public servant, and honest. It is a real pleasure, and it is a Commission that other than the things that come up and upset you personally, or that you do know people, other than that, it is ran in such a clean, outstanding way. It is a pleasure to go into those meetings. You never anticipate something that is going to be embarrassing to you, or to anyone else. They just seem to do a very, very good job.

Chair Furfaro:

Vice Chair Nakamura.

Ms. Nakamura: Thank you, Mrs. Ventura, for putting your name forward. The Liquor Commission is one (1) of five (5) Commissions that have the power to hire and to remove the Director. I wanted to ask you, when you evaluate the Director of the Liquor Commission, what are the things that you think are probably the most important?

Ms. Ventura: We have done that. It has been a couple of years now for me, but he has an excellent (inaudible) with his Staff. For us, and when I was new, anything I had...I could call him at home, I could call him in the Office. He would say, "Come in if you want." There was always time to address issues, and I suspect he is still doing that.

Ms. Nakamura: Are you looking also outside of the organization to see the Director's relationship to the larger community and stake holders that you serve?

Ms. Ventura: Yes, again, he is somebody who seems to participate—when we go to Kaua'i Community College (KCC), to anything, and he is opening the door. He is helping with functions that they do. He just seems to be a big part of the community, which again, is probably important for most Directors that they be known. People feel comfortable with going to him, I think.

Ms. Nakamura: To me, a big piece of being on one of these Commissions is understanding the Department's Budget and strategic direction. I just wanted to pass that along that I am hoping that every Commission really takes that and works with the Department Staff to develop that strategic plan and direction, and really hold the Department accountable to achieving the objectives set out for the year. I just wanted to pass that along and encourage you to be a part of that.

Ms. Ventura: Yes. Again, that is one of his strengths. We often say to him, "Maybe we should have a little bigger party when we have the State meetings here." Again, he is very strict on Budget. He just keeps a straight—you cannot quibble with most of his decisions.

Ms. Nakamura: Thank you very much for volunteering for this Commission.

Ms. Ventura: You are welcome.

Chair Furfaro: Ross, and then you, Mr. Bynum.

Mr. Kagawa: Thank you, Pauline. Thank you for your prior years of service, and volunteering for the other Commissions. I just wanted to let you know that I have no problem with your confirmation. I am very happy that you mentioned that one of the major focuses is trying to make sure that the Liquor stores and establishments do not sell alcohol to youths. Thank you very much.

Ms. Ventura: One of the other big concerns that I do not think I mentioned; I am sure others have, but you do want these establishments to succeed. The island needs it. The individuals need it. It is jobs. Our job is also to promote and to help them, and we honestly feel badly when there are lapses, and something occurs that causes somebody to lose a license. You do not want that happening. It is in everybody's interest to work in doing in right and keeping it.

Mr. Kagawa: I guess a follow up to that is that I know in Las Vegas where there are a lot of youths that try to use fake Identification (ID)s and such. They even...because sometimes it is hard to distinguish whether that is really in fact the person. They kind of look like them, and I heard that they even ask them to repeat their ID number, which would be that "H00..." To me, if we did that, it would be pretty hard because I do not know too much kids that would remember that number. We kind of learned growing up to remember our Social Security number, but I guess...if they are in doubt, they could even ask them on the birthday, and I guess if they did not study up, they would not remember that person's ID's birthday. Those are some ways. I do know that there are some uses of other peoples' ID going around.

Ms. Ventura: I think I have found that over forty-eight (48) years—fifty (50), actually this week, in my own children. We have dealt with that. It was not pretty. We have one kid say, "You and dad need therapy." I said, "You are right, we do." Yes, that is another big concern. Hawai'i's, and I do not know if there are other States now, but I know that what we were doing a couple of years ago, when we made it the other way. It is a huge help for them. The trouble is at

these places when they get going and get really, really busy, it happens in a flash that they do not pick it up or something. Then they have a violation.

Mr. Kagawa: I talked to one of my golfers that I regularly golf with, and he works at a service station mini-mart. He says that it is pretty difficult sometimes, but the fine is so heavy that he said—because they have to personally pay also besides the owner, yes?

Ms. Ventura: Yes, it is a big deterrent.

Mr. Kagawa: We have a good deterrent in place. We just have to—and I think those are in place because we know the importance of not being like the old days when there was a secret that everybody knew you could get liquor from this place. It is not happening anymore. That is good thing. Thank you.

Chair Furfaro: Thank you, Mr. Kagawa. Mr. Bynum, you have the floor.

Mr. Bynum: Mrs. Ventura, thank you for being here. I apologize for coming in late, I had to drop off my car. I did read your application and I have some familiarity with you. I just wanted to thank you for your willingness to serve. You are going to be an outstanding asset to an already a very strong Commission, I think. I also want to echo my experience with Mr. Honma. It has been very positive over the years. When I first worked for the County, he mentored me some, and I do not even know if he knows that, but I really appreciated it. I just want to thank you for your service.

Ms. Ventura: You are welcome. Thank you.

Chair Furfaro: Pauline, I just want to say how grateful I am that you are willing to step forward again. I think knowing that I had been both an internal customer, as well as an external customer, because I once carried a liquor license for a hotel. I want to find an opportunity here to say that your experience and history on the Commission will be very beneficial for our County, and I will be supporting you when we vote. I just want to say thank you. I am very grateful for your willingness to serve again.

Ms. Ventura: Thank you. It is nice to see familiar faces, and new faces.

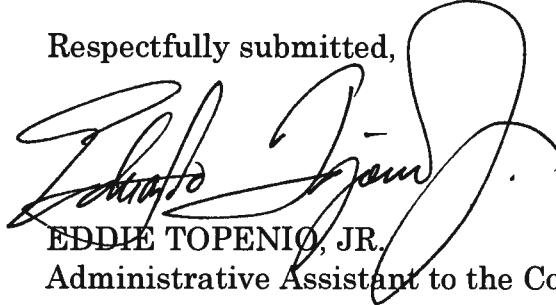
Chair Furfaro: Thank you very much. On that note, I am going to go ahead and close this Special Meeting for today. We will need to be back in five (5) minutes to start our regular Committee Meeting. Pauline, again, thank you very much.

Ms. Ventura:                      You are very welcome. Thank you.

ADJOURNMENT.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eddie Topenio, Jr.", is written over the printed name and title.

EDDIE TOPENIO, JR.

Administrative Assistant to the County Clerk

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